



5/13/2026

Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules

Re: Wetlands Rule Amendments

Dear Chair and Members of LCAR:

On behalf of the Vermont Builders & Remodelers Association (VBRA), we write in strong support of the proposed wetlands rule amendments currently before the Committee.

VBRA does not view these changes as a significant rollback of Vermont's environmental protections. The proposal is narrowly focused on designated growth areas that communities and the State have already identified as appropriate locations for concentrated development. Importantly, Class I wetlands remain fully protected, and the rules continue to require mitigation for impacts to wetlands.

We believe the proposed changes appropriately balance environmental stewardship with the practical realities of permitting and construction in already-developed areas. Reducing the buffer from 50 feet to 25 feet in these limited locations, along with allowing the use of state wetland mapping rather than requiring seasonal delineation work in every instance, will improve predictability and reduce unnecessary delays without meaningfully undermining wetland protections.

Vermont's environmental goals and its housing and land-use goals are not inherently in conflict. Encouraging compact development in designated centers helps reduce sprawl, infrastructure expansion, and fragmentation of rural and forested lands.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work on these rules.

Sincerely,
Dixie O'Connor
President
Vermont Builders & Remodelers Association